



Bay Area First 5 Commissions Help Children To Be Healthy

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Mission: First 5 is improving the lives of children from birth to 5 years old, by making sure they are healthy, nurtured, and ready to succeed in school and life.

Why Do First 5s Invest In Children’s Health?

“Children in good health attend school more often, get more out of their education, and are much more likely to be healthy, productive adults,” according to Children Now.¹

Why Is Having Health Insurance Important?

Children who *don’t have health insurance* develop more severe health problems and are **four times more likely to end up in an emergency room** or to be hospitalized.² We save approximately \$7,000 in public funds for each child hospital visit that is prevented.³ When uninsured children end up in overcrowded emergency rooms and hospitals for preventable health problems, it impacts all of us.

How Do Bay Area First 5s Make A Difference?

For over eight years, First 5 has invested in the health of our most vulnerable children from birth to five years old:

Bay Area First 5s Help Children Get Health Care

First 5 enrolled approximately **17,000 Bay Area children** from low-income families last year in health insurance so they can visit the doctor regularly and be healthier.

These efforts are working! **Over 97% of young children in the Bay Area had health insurance and a “medical home”** or a regular place to go for preventive care, when they were sick, or when their parents needed health advice in 2007.⁴

Over **97%** of Bay Area Children Are Now **Insured**



Bay Area Children Seeking Emergency Room Services Dropped From 2005 To 2007

Children from low-income working families in the Bay Area are now less likely to end up in the emergency room (ER).

One in four children (25%) went to the emergency room in 2005. By 2007 — this dropped to less than one in five (17%).⁵

Bay Area First 5s Help Children Get Checked For Special Needs

Almost **35,000 children** got checked for special needs such as autism, hearing, and speech problems last year. Then, children with special health concerns got the help they needed to get on track.

Bay Area First 5s Help Mothers Give Birth To Healthy Babies

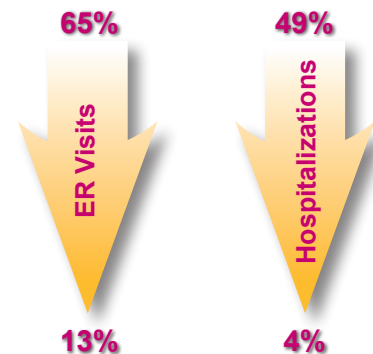
Last year, Bay Area First 5s helped **3,486 pregnant women** who were at risk for drug and alcohol abuse to deliver healthy babies. For example, First 5 Solano County reached out to high risk pregnant women and 88% of their babies were born substance free last year. Each healthy baby born saved an estimated \$78,000 in neonatal hospital costs.

Bay Area 5s Help Children Get Dental Care

Thanks to First 5, **14,428 children** in the Bay Area had dental checkups last year, had cavities filled or abscessed teeth removed, and learned how to take better care of their teeth.

Bay Area 5s Help Children With Asthma

Uninsured children with asthma often end up in the ER getting expensive treatment for severe asthma attacks that could have been prevented by regular doctor visits and medication. Alameda County First 5 reaches out to children with asthma who have already been to the emergency room. Their effort is working wonders! Children who got services showed a huge drop in subsequent emergency room visits (from 65% to 13%) and hospitalizations (from 49% to 4%).



After First 5 Funded Services, Emergency Medical Visits By Children With Asthma Dropped In Alameda County



Because Of First 5, Santa Cruz County Exceeds The National Average For Children's Access To Health Care.

One Family's Story

Katy Boriack has a good job earning \$34,000 a year and goes to community college so she can transfer to the University of California. When her son Ayden was born, Katy learned that her health insurance would go up to \$4,200 a year. As a single mom, Katy pays almost \$10,000 a year on child care costs, in addition to food and rent. She knew she couldn't pay the new health insurance cost. Then Katy learned about Healthy Kids, a children's health plan supported by First 5. Thanks to Healthy Kids, two-year-old Ayden gets regular care from a pediatrician and Katy has the comfort of knowing Ayden is healthy and taken care of so she can focus on finishing her education and providing for her family.

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years of life. This is why California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support children from birth to five years old and their parents in the areas of health, family support, and early childhood development. Bay Area First 5s provided support to almost 400,000 children and parents last year. For more information, please visit: <http://www.first5kids.org/bay>.

¹ Children Now, "California Report Card 2008: The State of the State's Children."

² American College of Physicians, "Statement to the Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Health," 2004.

³ Cousineau, M. R., "Preventable Hospitalizations Among Children in California Counties after Child Health Insurance Expansion Initiatives," 2007.

⁴ California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) for the 12 Bay Area Counties, for ages 0-5, 2007.

⁵ For children ages 0-5 in families from 200%-299% of the Federal Poverty Level, (CHIS) for the 12 Bay Area Counties, 2005 and 2007.

All other data come from Bay Area First 5 Commissions for 2007-2008.